

and Border Patrol, various U.S. airlines, and non-governmental organizations to focus on interdicting traffickers by training commercial transportation employees to recognize the indicators for trafficking. Speakers, including Deborah Sigmund, founder of a non-government organization called Innocents at Risk, explained how flight attendants were the “first line of defense” in the fight against human trafficking.

Flight attendants are in the unique position to observe a potential trafficking in progress and then call a trafficking hotline or inform the pilot to radio ahead so that the proper authorities can intervene.

Former flight attendant Nancy Rivard, President of Airline Ambassadors International, told us how she and other flight attendants compared notes one day and were shocked and dismayed at how often they had noticed what they suspected was a trafficked woman or child on their flight, but had no training or protocol to do something about it. Nancy has been doing a great deal about it ever since, training airline employees around the United States and world.

Just last year, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) released a similar training initiative, the Blue Lightning program, to domestic U.S. airlines—including Delta, JetBlue, Allegiant, and North American Airlines. With minimal modifications, the training is also easily adaptable to bus drivers and station operators, train conductors, trucking associations, and other transportation industry professionals.

In December 2013, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, or OSCE, which comprises 57 countries from Europe and North America, endorsed my plan to make anti-trafficking training for airline employees, other public and commercial carriers, as well as hotel employees, a primary goal in the international strategy to combat human trafficking. In an earlier session, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCEPA) adopted my resolution to implement such training in each member country.

But what about our State Department personnel working overseas? Are they properly trained to be able to recognize the signs of this heinous crime and violation of fundamental human rights?

Current law does require that State Department personnel be trained to identify trafficking victims, and there are many fine foreign service officers tasked with addressing trafficking issues.

But, it does not prescribe any minimum training requirements. H.R. 357, the Human Trafficking Prevention Act, would mandate several minimum training requirements on this issue within the Department of State.

These would include a training course for Department personnel who deal with trafficking issues, in addition to trafficking briefings for all Ambassadors and Deputy Chiefs of Mission before they depart for their posts. The legislation also requires that annual reminders be sent to appropriate personnel on key trafficking issues related to their countries of focus.

By specifying the minimum requirements for such training, this bill strengthens the existing law. And notably, it does so at no additional cost to taxpayers.

I want to thank Mr. MALONEY for authoring this measure, and adding to the body of legis-

lation developed by the House to address this critical issue.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 357.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ENHANCING SERVICES FOR RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS VICTIMS OF YOUTH TRAFFICKING ACT OF 2015

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 468) to amend the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act to increase knowledge concerning, and improve services for, runaway and homeless youth who are victims of trafficking.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 468

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Enhancing Services for Runaway and Homeless Victims of Youth Trafficking Act of 2015”.

SEC. 2. AMENDMENTS.

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5701 et seq.) is amended—

(1) in section 343(b)(5)—

(A) in subparagraph (A) by inserting “, severe forms of trafficking in persons (as defined in section 103(9) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102(9))), and sex trafficking (as defined in section 103(10) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 7102(10)))” before the semicolon at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (B) by inserting “, severe forms of trafficking in persons (as defined in section 103(9) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102(9))), and sex trafficking (as defined in section 103(10) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 7102(10)))” after “assault”; and

(C) in subparagraph (C) by inserting “, including such youth who are victims of trafficking (as defined in section 103(15) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102(15)))” before the semicolon at the end; and

(2) in section 351(a) by striking “or sexual exploitation” and inserting “sexual exploitation, severe forms of trafficking in persons (as defined in section 103(9) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7102(9))), or sex trafficking (as defined in section 103(10) of such Act (22 U.S.C. 7102(10)))”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 468.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Enhancing Services for Runaway and Homeless Victims of Youth Trafficking Act, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, human trafficking is not just a concern in foreign countries. It is happening right here in the United States and many times in our own backyards.

In Michigan, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children has referred more than 13,000 CyberTipline reports of suspected child sexual exploitation to law enforcement.

Last Congress, I hosted a series of human trafficking forums in my district which brought together county prosecutors, sheriffs, the State police, and members of the southern Michigan Task Force on Human Trafficking to discuss how our community is dealing with these heinous crimes and hear feedback on what additional actions Congress can take to help local law enforcement combat trafficking.

One of the things I heard at my district roundtables is the need for improved resources for victims’ advocacy and support, especially for youth victims and at-risk youth. Federal and State officials, law enforcement, the courts, all of us have a moral obligation to eradicate trafficking and support its victims.

It will take close coordination between all stakeholders to achieve the dual goals of ending the human trafficking epidemic and assisting the victims. That is why I am an original cosponsor of H.R. 468, the Enhancing Services for Runaway and Homeless Victims of Youth Trafficking Act.

This legislation will help better serve our most vulnerable youth who are victims of extreme trafficking. This legislation amends the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act to use existing grant resources to train staff on the effects of human trafficking in runaway and homeless youth victims and for developing statewide strategies to reach such youth.

It also allows the Secretary to utilize the existing Street Outreach Program to provide street-based services for runaway and homeless youth who are victims of trafficking.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague, Congressman JOE HECK, for his leadership on this bill, as well as the Education and the Workforce Committee chairman, Mr. KLINE, and the ranking member, Mr. SCOTT, for their work on moving this legislation forward. Our Nation’s runaway and homeless youth deserve access to services that will help them escape a life of crime, abuse, and neglect.

Passing this simple fix to the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act will help ensure that those suffering from the trauma of these deplorable crimes

will have access to the care and support they need.

I urge my colleagues to vote for H.R. 468, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 468, the Enhancing Services for Runaway and Homeless Victims of Youth Trafficking Act of 2015.

I am honored to join my colleagues, the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HECK), the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG), and the chairman of the full committee, Mr. KLINE, and appreciate their leadership on this important issue.

Our bill makes important changes in the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, so that victims of sexual exploitation and trafficking can get more of the help that they need. We know that trafficking and youth homelessness are often affecting the same populations.

Young people that have run away or are homeless are particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation and trafficking, and programs targeted towards the runaway and homeless youth should be simultaneously equipped to support victims of trafficking when there is such an overlap.

Research consistently confirms the correlation between running away and becoming exploited through prostitution. For example, according to a 2006 FBI Uniform Crime Report, girls who run away from their homes, group homes, foster homes, or treatment centers are at high risk of being targeted by a trafficker or becoming exploited.

Street outreach programs were created to provide services to runaway and homeless and street youth who have been subjected to or are at risk of being subjected to sexual abuse. Every year, 25,000 of these young people find shelter as a result of these programs.

The legislation being considered today ensures that street outreach programs can rely on funding already available through the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act. This allows the Department of Health and Human Services to provide street-based services such as individual assessments, treatment, counseling, or other shelter for runaway and homeless youth who are also victims of trafficking.

Additionally, the bill authorizes States, organizations, and other entities to use runaway and homeless youth research grants for staff training to work with these young victims. Such additional training will allow service providers to successfully address the behavioral and emotional effects of the abuse and assault that these victims endure.

Our bill also enhances training programs so that staff will be able to recognize and respond to the unique needs of trafficking victims. This is a small but important change, one necessary to improve services available.

Updating the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act with this legislation is an

important first step, but it is also important for Congress to consider reauthorizing the entire act, which expired last year.

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In the 113th Congress, the Senate Judiciary Committee approved a bipartisan reauthorization bill that would provide other critical support to runaway and homeless youth, including extending time for safe and appropriate shelter, establishing performance standards for assistance programs, strengthening data collection, and ensuring that adequate resources for all runaway and homeless youths are available.

It is my hope that the House can continue the spirit of bipartisanship and comprehensively update the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act. Our Nation's most vulnerable youth need us to come together and work together on their behalf.

Meanwhile, Mr. Speaker, I encourage all of my colleagues to support the legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE), the chairman of the Education and the Workforce Committee.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding the time and for his consistent, continuous leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, as a father and grandfather, I find it difficult to imagine anything more terrifying than a loved one falling victim to youth sex trafficking. Yet each year, hundreds of thousands of children and families are forced to live with the pain and suffering that stems from this deplorable crime.

Mr. Speaker, let me be clear. This crime is taking place right here in our own country. It is impacting our communities, our families, and our children. We face a national crisis, and it demands a national response.

Fortunately, there are heroic efforts underway to fight this heinous crime, care for the victims, and support their families.

The dedicated staff at the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, or NCMEC, are on the front lines every day identifying victims, assisting law enforcement in the recovery of missing children, and returning children to their loved ones.

NCMEC is also partnering with schools and employers to enhance support for victims and their families. Parents with children in school are probably familiar with Lifetouch photography. Through its SmileSafe Kids initiative, Lifetouch is making it easier for parents and NCMEC to alert law enforcement of a missing child in order to accelerate the search and rescue.

NCMEC and others are always finding new ways to help, and so should we, and that is why we are here today. We have learned too often victims fall

through the cracks of States' child welfare systems. Those who may be runaway or homeless youth do not have access to the full range of services they need.

And believe it or not, due to a flaw in the law, there are times when children are treated as criminals—as criminals, Mr. Speaker—rather than the victims of a violent crime.

Congress has an opportunity to address these challenges and strengthen our support for victims of youth sex trafficking. I want to thank my Republican and Democratic colleagues for working with us on this important effort, including Mr. WALBERG, as I mentioned earlier; the ranking member of the Education and the Workforce Committee, Mr. SCOTT; and Representatives JOE HECK, KAREN BASS, and JOYCE BEATTY.

I am pleased that in the early days of the 114th Congress, we are taking action to address youth sex trafficking. It reflects both the seriousness of this crime and our commitment to the victims and their families.

I urge my colleagues to support these important legislative proposals.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for his statements in support of this legislation, I thank Mr. HECK for sponsoring it, and Mr. KLINE as the leader on this committee.

This is a privilege of service in this body, when we can come together in a bipartisan fashion to do what is right for our country; but, in this case, to do what is right for our defenseless young people, many of whom have been caught into a web that offers nothing but pain and misfortune for the future. To take a stand on this issue, to stand for opportunity, to push back against the dark clouds of crime that prey on young people is something that we can stand together on.

I think we have said significant words in support of this legislation. Now it is time to get to work, and the best way to do that, Mr. Speaker, as you and I both know, is to pass it.

So I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 468, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 468.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

STRENGTHENING CHILD WELFARE RESPONSE TO TRAFFICKING ACT OF 2015

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 469) to amend the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act to enable State child protective services